

Message Text

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SUBJECT: EVANS AND NOVAK COLUMN ON TURKEY

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF EVANS AND NOVAK COLUMN APPEARING IN
APRIL 25 "WASHINGTON POST", DATELINED ANKARA:

1. BEGIN TEXT. RUSSIAN VENTURES IN TURKEY. FISHING IN
THE TROUBLED WATERS OF US-TURKISH RELATIONS, THE KREMLIN IS
QUIETLY PRESSING TURKEY TO SIGN A NEW "DOCUMENT" THAT WOULD
COMMIT BOTH COUNTRIES, IN ADVANCE OF ANY MILITARY OPERA-
TIONS, TO POLITICAL "CONSULTATION" THAT TURKEY FEELS WOULD
BE INCONSISTENT WITH ITS NATO TREATY OBLIGATIONS.

2. WESTERN DIPLOMATS ARE IN DOUBT AS TO HOW FAR THE "CON-
SULTATION" WOULD GO, AND TURKISH OFFICIALS REFUSE TO
DISCUSS IT. BUT THE ASSUMPTION IS THAT THE "DOCUMENT,"
PRESSED UNSUCCESSFULLY ON TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER IHSAN
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CAGLAYANGIL DURING HIS VISIT TO MOSCOW LAST MONTH, MARKS A
NEW STAGE IN MOSCOW'S POLITICAL CAMPAIGN. THE CAMPAIGN:
TO EXPLOIT THE WEAKENING OF TURKEY'S MILITARY AND POLITICAL
ALLIANCE WITH THE UNITED STATES. THE ALLIANCE WAS STRAINED
BY US PRESSURES ON TURKEY ARISING OUT OF TURKEY'S 1974
INVASION OF CYPRUS.

3. APART FROM THE MYSTERIOUS "DOCUMENT," THE SOVIET UNION HAS BECOME TURKEY'S PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE--A ROLE FORMERLY PLAYED BY WASHINGTON. INDEED, MOSCOW'S MOST RECENT LINE OF CREDIT TO THE COUNTRY WITH WHICH IT SHARES A 500 MILE BORDER IS A TIDY DOLS 1.2 BILLION OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS OR SO. THESE CREDITS ARE BEING USED FOR STEEL, ALUMINUM, HYDROELECTRIC, OIL REFINING AND OTHER INDUSTRIAL COMPLEXES THAT TURKEY DESPERATELY NEEDS TO CONTINUE ITS PATH FROM A PREDOMINANTLY AGRICULTURAL TO A MIXED ECONOMY.

4. THE ECONOMIC FRAGILITY OF TURKEY, WHICH IS GIVING THE SOVIETS THEIR ENTREE, IS DRAMATIZED BY A FEW STATISTICS: BALANCE OF PAYMENTS NOW RUNNING DOLS 2 BILLION IN THE RED; FOREIGN EXCHANGE; A HEALTHY DOLS 2.5 BILLION IN 1974--THE YEAR OF THE CYPRUS INVASION--NOW AT A PERILOUS DOLS 651 MILLION; UNEMPLOYMENT, A DIFFICULT COMPUTATION FOR THIS RURAL POPULATION, FIGURES AT 25 PERCENT, AND INFLATION ABOUT THE SAME.

5. PRIME MINISTER SULEYMAN DEMIREL EXAGGERATES WHEN HE BLAMES THE AMERICAN ARMS EMBARGO--AND THE CONTINUING BAN ON GRANT MILITARY AID--FOR THIS BLEAK ECONOMIC PICTURE. BUT THE EMBARGO NEVERTHELESS HAS BEEN A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR AS TURKEY HAS DIPPED INTO ITS MEAGER FOREIGN EXCHANGE FUND TO BUY EXPENSIVE ARMS.

6. WHAT MAKES THIS SIGNIFICANT IS TURKEY'S GEOGRAPHY: ITS IMPORTANCE AS THE EASTERN ANCHOR OF NATO, THE GUARDIAN OF

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THE VITAL DARDANELLES WATERWAY BETWEEN THE BLACK AND MEDITERRANEAN SEAS, AND THE POSSESSOR OF THE LARGEST NATO ARMY NEXT TO THAT OF THE UNITED STATES. MANY WESTERN EXPERTS SAY TURKEY WOULD NOT TAKE ITSELF OUT OF NATO UNDER ANY FORESEEABLE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND THAT ITS GREATEST AMBITION IS TO TIGHTEN ITS ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL TIES WITH EUROPE, WITH NATO ITS BRIDGE TO THE WEST.

7. BUT MOSCOW, CONVINCED THE TURKISH EFFORT IS WORTH MAKING, IS COMMITTING MANIFOLD RESOURCES TO IT, USING ALL THE FAMILIAR MACHINATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT "LAUNDERED" SOVIET FUNDS ARE FINANCING RADICAL LEFT-WING STUDENT MOVEMENTS. STUDENT TERRORISM HAS BECOME ONE OF THE BIGGEST DOMESTIC ISSUES IN THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE JUNE 5 ELECTION; NEARLY 150 STUDENTS WERE KILLED LAST YEAR IN SHOOTOUTS BETWEEN LEFT AND RIGHT STUDENT FACTIONS.

8. THIS UNDERCOVER SOVIET ROLE IS STANDARD FARE. BUT, IN ADDITION, THE HIGH QUALITY OF SOVIET DIPLOMATS ASSIGNED

HERE ALSO SIGNALS MOSCOW'S CONVICTION THAT TURKEY IS INDEED

MANEUVERABLE. THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR HEADS A MISSION THAT RANKS ON A PAR WITH SOVIET EMBASSIES IN WASHINGTON, LONDON AND PARIS. THE AMBASSADOR HIMSELF IS ONE OF MOSCOW'S TOP DIPLOMATS.

9. THE DANGER TO THE WESTERN DEFENSE SYSTEM OF THIS INTENSIFYING SOVIET CAMPAIGN RESTS ON CONTINUATION OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE UNITED STATES, WHICH BEGAN WITH THE CONGRESSIONALLY IMPOSED ARMS EMBARGO IN 1974 AND THE SUBSEQUENT DECISION HERE TO CLOSE DOWN U.S. BASES.

10. THE RESULT OF THAT BASE-CLOSING, ACCORDING TO THE BEST ESTIMATES, HAS BEEN THE LOSS OF ABOUT 50 PERCENT OF THE INTELLIGENCE PRODUCT FROM MISSILE MONITORING AND OTHER ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE CONDUCTED AGAINST THE SOVIET
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UNION--A SIGNIFICANT COST.

11. THE POLITICAL IMPACT HERE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S LATEST PROPOSALS TO MODIFY THE ARMS EMBARGO--BUT TO POSTPONE A SERIOUS DRIVE FOR CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF THE NEW DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT SIGNED 13 MONTHS AGO--IS NOT YET FULLY KNOWN.

12. WHAT IS KNOWN IS THAT MOSCOW IS PLAYING EVER HARDER ON AGGRIEVED TURKISH EMOTIONS WITH THE LIKELIHOOD THAT ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENTS WILL BE FANNED IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. A CONFIDENTIAL STUDY BY THE RAND CORPORATION NOW UNDER SCRUTINY IN WASHINGTON MAKES THE POINT: "THE SOVIETS WILL PROBABLY MAKE A QUIET BREAKTHROUGH--ALREADY WELL PREPARED--IN TURKEY, THE RECIPIENT OF THE LARGEST AMOUNT OF SOVIET AID LAST YEAR, WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY LEAD TO A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THE BALANCE OF POWER IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. END TEXT.
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